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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 000445

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [EWWT](#) [MASS](#) [SENV](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR ADMITS LIMITATIONS
IN CAPACITY

REF: LAGOS 370

Classified By: Consul General Donna Blair for Reasons 1.4 (B,D)

SUMMARY

1. (C) Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) Director General Temisanren Omatseye asked to see the Ambassador on November 9 (Pol/Econ Officer Notetaker). Omatseye admitted severe limitations in current capacity but outlined an ambitious program for addressing maritime domain awareness, enforcement capability, and reducing waterborne crime and pollution particularly in Lagos. The Ambassador mentioned the training programs in association with Africa Partnership Station and particularly the planned visit of USCG vessel Gallatin in June 2010 as possible opportunities. In addition, Omatseye reported that NIMASA has placed a proposal regarding ship emissions on the agenda of the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference. END SUMMARY.

STARTING FROM ZERO CAPACITY

2. (C) Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) Director General Temisanren Omatseye met with the Ambassador in Lagos on November 9 (Pol/EconOff notetaker). Omatseye described the capacity of NIMASA to enforce Nigerian maritime law as "zero" at the time he became Director General in July. He described his job as "transforming NIMASA from a revenue collection agency into a regulatory and enforcement agency." Omatseye believes he has the mandate to do this and will receive the resources and political backing to fulfill this mission, but seeks U.S. support in capacity building.

MARITIME DOMAIN AWARENESS

3. (C) Omatseye says the first step to fulfilling his mission is to obtain the capacity to monitor maritime movements up to 1,000 nautical miles off Nigeria's coast. Omatseye plans to achieve this by combining the capacity of the Regional Maritime Awareness Capability (RMAC), a system with a range of 30 nautical miles which has already been installed with U.S. assistance at Western Naval Command Lagos with a repeater station at NIMASA Marine Resource Center in Apapa, with a Long Range Tracking Identification System which NIMASA intends to acquire. (NOTE: a second RMAC station is

scheduled for installation at Bonny Island in January, and, money permitting, the British will fund the installation of a third RMAC station near Calabar next year. END NOTE.) Only after NIMASA can identify every vessel approaching and operating in Nigerian waters and track its movements will it be able to effectively interdict illegal activities such as smuggling, poaching, piracy and illegal oil bunkering.

MOST CRIME OCCURS IN LAGOS WATERS

¶4. (C) Omatseye claims that 80 percent of all waterborne criminal activities registered in Nigeria occur in Lagos waters. This includes both armed sea robbery and illegal bunkering. NIMASA plans to spend one billion naira (\$6.7 million) of existing funding to acquire four to five fast patrol boats before the end of this year. These boats will be on patrol in Lagos harbor around-the-clock and will be crewed by armed Nigerian Navy personnel seconded to the Maritime Guard Command under NIMASA's control. Omatseye expects to have a significant impact on curtailing criminal activities in the Lagos area with these assets.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS EXPRESSED

¶5. (C) Omatseye expressed a firm commitment to addressing the environmental as well as the security aspects of his portfolio. He told the Ambassador that he wants Lagos waters

LAGOS 00000445 002 OF 002

to be as clean as the Hudson River. (NOTE: OSC was present at the commissioning of two new pollution control scavenger boats acquired by NIMASA on October 22. END NOTE.) Omatseye also reported on a successful initiative of his organization to put a proposal regarding ship emissions on the agenda of the upcoming conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen. (NOTE: Post has asked for more details and will report by Septel. END NOTE.)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION

¶6. (C) The Ambassador mentioned to Omatseye the possible training opportunities for NIMASA personnel during the up-coming APS ship visits in addition to the on-going support with respect to RMAC. The visit of the USCG ship Gallatin scheduled for June 2010 in particular will offer opportunities for training NIMASA personnel in the skills required to make the organization more effective as an enforcement agency.

¶7. (C) ConGen Lagos coordinated this cable with Embassy Abuja.

BLAIR